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ADDRESS
OF
HON. M. E. INGALLS
BEFORE THE
COMMERCIAL CLUB OF CINCINNATI,
ON THE
ACQUISITION OF THE PHILIPPINES,
JANUARY 21, 1899.

CINCINNATI,
THE ROBERT CLARKE COMPANY,
1899.

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MR. PRESIDENT AND GENTLEMEN OF THE COMMERCIAL CLUB :

There has been so much said on this question, pro and con, in the newspapers and in the halls of Congress, that it is difficult to say any thing new, and it is much more difficult to make any statements without attempting to quote or dispute with those who have delivered arguments in regard to the question. It seems to be to-day the one question of great interest. I think we can all agree that if Dewey, after he destroyed the Spanish fleet, had sailed home, we should have been delighted. We should have avoided a difficult question and a vast amount of trouble ; and yet, the same thing is true of almost every day of our lives. Very few of us can go through the world like the current of a brook that breaks over no rocks or waterfalls. We have to face responsibilities ; we have to meet conditions ; and the wise and brave meet them boldly and unflinchingly as a part of the duty of life. So must the nation.

I have not much patience with statesmen who are trying to defeat the present treaty in order to prevent some supposed evil that may come hereafter. If the government has acted wisely and honestly up to date, why not stand by it and say so, and leave it for the future to develop such differences as may arise. Some of us were opposed to the Spanish war, but we all rejoice

in its results, and there are very few to-day who are not glad that Spanish dominion is ended on this western continent, and who will not agree that the suffering and expenditure have been well made for that purpose.

I wish some of those gentlemen who talk so loudly against the Philippines would tell us what they would have had the government do different from what it has done. I can well understand that the payment of twenty millions of dollars to the Spaniards is open to criticism. We had them beaten, and we could have forced any terms; but, as a business proposition, the payment of twenty millions was undoubtedly cheaper than to open the conflict or continue the contest, to say nothing about the humanitarian side of it. Would these gentlemen who lead this opposition have had us turn the islands back to Spain or leave them in their hands? This would have been the great crime of the nineteenth century. For nearly three centuries the Spaniard has governed these islands as badly as only Spain can. She has kept them from improving; she has kept a large portion of the inhabitants in barbarism; she has used every means known to civilization to extort money from the people that inhabit them. Between the church and the state, history records no worse government than she has furnished to these people. It so happened in the contest that we conquered the Spaniards in these islands and they came into our hands. What could be said as an apology for any government that turned them back to the cruelties and corruption of Spain? Certainly no American citizen would face such a contingency. But we hear it said, "Let them govern themselves." Very good; this may do if we find they

are capable of governing themselves ; but the two hundred and fifty odd years of maladministration of the Spaniards has not been such as to educate eight millions of people sufficiently to enable them to govern themselves. If we had left the islands it would have meant that the different chiefs and clans would have warred with each other until the islands were desolated, or Germany or England or some foreign country would have stepped in and controlled them. In the interest of civilization, in the interest of humanity, there can be no question but that the government thus far has acted wisely and well. The sovereignty of the islands is ours. The future will determine slowly, step by step, what to do. Whether we shall aid in securing a permanent government there, and then withdraw entirely ; whether we shall give the people of those islands autonomy in government and retain a nominal sovereignty, or whether we shall hold them absolutely, is yet to be determined. Humanitarian principles as well as conditions of trade must govern, to a large extent, this question. Whether this or that can be done constitutionally, I do not propose to discuss to-night. That is a legal question and you will find the best minds of the Republic arrayed on each side. Whatever we may conclude to do, unquestionably there will be a proper and legal way found to do it. This constitution of ours which we so reverence, and justly, will be found to be a wider and broader instrument than is claimed by some. In my life I have several times heard the tocsin sound its alarm against the shattering of the constitution and its proposed violation, but it seems to have come out of each contest stronger and better for the trial. One statesman who deems it wise politically

any that she has ever secured; it has aided her commerce, it has built up the civilization of the world.

The history of our own country from its beginning until to-day has been one of expansion, and expansion beyond even the proposition of to-day in regard to the Philippines. From the first sailing of John Smith to the Virginias, or of the Mayflower to the Massachusetts' capes, it has been one steady tread of the Anglo-Saxon race pushing back the inferior Indian race and planting the seeds of civilization, over the Alleghanies—first through the wilderness, a longer and more difficult journey than to-day to the Philippines; then the Louisiana purchase, which was opposed in its day as thoroughly as expansion is opposed now; after that, the acquisition of California, which was more than one hundred days' distant from the capital and seat of government; all this has been in pursuance of the law of the world's progress and civilization, the tread of the conquering people marching west and fulfilling the law of a higher power than ours. The Philippines to-day, by fast steamers, are within fifteen day's sail of this country; by ordinary steamers, twenty-five days; by cable, within a few minutes' communication. Let us not allow ourselves to be misled and deluded by arguments of old men no longer willing to grapple with the great problems of life, or by capitalists, who with the timidity of millions, fear to risk any more—but let us rather encourage the warm, vigorous Anglo-Saxon blood to go forward fulfilling its destiny and doing our part for the future civilization of the world and the control of its commerce.